



Assessment Strategy

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Assessment Information

Each semester consists of up to 2 modules being delivered over 10 weeks. Students must pass each module taught to gain the full Award. As students' progress through each module they will undertake assignments. Each module will comprise of at least 1 assessment that will contribute to the students' overall grade and a number of smaller more informal opportunities to assist the students' assimilation of the learning. The majority of assessments will be completed on an individual basis but some will involve group work, if required by the assessment criteria.

In addition to contributing to the students' academic profile, continuous assessment provides valuable feedback information for students, lecturers and where applicable, sponsors.

Assignments are part of the course module assessment and are normally set when students have finished working through the relevant lectures, seminars and tutorials. There are many types of assignments, including

- management reports
- essays,
- time constrained tests,
- case studies,
- role plays,
- viva voce,
- scientific reports
- oral presentations and
- portfolio production

Essay

An essay is written in a flowing style. It is often used for the discussion of a particular topic with a clear structure to argue specific points (it is very important that evidence is offered to support the argument), with an introduction and a conclusion. Essays should always be accompanied by a bibliography indicating what sources have been used. Students should follow a consistent style of citation/referencing.

Report

Reports are generally tighter in structure than essays, divided into sections and sub-sections (usually numbered). Sections should usually include the objectives of the report, information on topics included, and recommendations or conclusions. Reports normally adopt a comparatively concise format of writing. Remember sources must be quoted whilst compiling a report. Bibliography should adhere to Harvard Referencing System.

Time constrained tests

In addition to coursework, some modules may require additional assessment through time constrained tests. There are many types of such assessments, such as written/oral exams and tests. Generally tests will take place during normal class sessions. It is a measure of how students solve problems under time constrained test/exam conditions. Time constrained tests prepare individuals for future work, e.g. working under tight deadlines, solving tasks in a set time, etc.

Group work

Generally this will be assessed during timetabled sessions. It is a measure of how students solve problems in a team situation (a good preparation for the work environment!). Important points to be considered: time management; task goals; role allocation; the interaction of group members; and how the group work will be evaluated. The work of the group will be marked as a whole and also the individual's contribution to it.

Presentation

This is usually a short presentation to the class/academic panel during a timetabled session. Students will need to consider the objectives of the presentation; the audience's knowledge and experience; appropriate supporting media or handouts; and how to structure the content to best communicate the message or findings.

Major Project

Students must be given a detailed introduction to preparing for and writing a major project at the start of the year. Guidance will be given on:

- formulating the subject of the major project
- structuring the content
- style, bibliographical and physical presentation
- Harvard Referencing
- the nature of supervision and the role of the supervisor

Students will have the opportunity to explore preliminary topics with a project supervisor at the start of their final year. They will also have the opportunity to meet the supervisor at regular intervals, as required.

Assignments are designed so that various types of coursework can be produced. Check the module assessment guidance or assignment brief for clarification of what is being asked to produce.

Regardless of the type of assessment, all tasks are based on the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit. Assessment tasks will also be set to cover higher grades (where applicable).

Assessment Design

It is the Centre's policy that multiple assessments tasks are produced and completed at timely intervals across the semester. These assessments are to be small "bite-sized" tasks meeting all the Assessment Criteria of the relevant section of the module and following the principles below. All assessment tasks are to be submitted to the programme leader, head of Department and QA department for verification PRIOR to release to students.

Enter Level & Level 1

- 1-2 smaller assignments meeting individual Learning Outcomes
- Submission dates spread over the semester
- Varied assessment tools used
- Tasks must be written for higher grades such as Merit and Distinction (where applicable)
- Grade descriptors must be clearly accessible with appropriate command verbs (create, design, produce, critically analyse, evaluate etc)
- All ACs must be covered
- All assessments to list all required evidence as a summary in addition to the formal tasks
 - eg style/format of presentation of assessment, word count etc
- Use of interim assessments to be summative
- Use of formative assessments to include regular "lite-touch" in class session activities
 - MCQs
 - Pop-tests
 - Quizzes
 - Debates
 - Student 5 min micro teach sessions

Enter 2 & 3

- 2-3 smaller assignments meeting individual Learning Outcomes
- Submission dates spread over the semester
- Varied assessment tools used
- Tasks must be written for higher grades such as Merit and Distinction (where applicable)
- Grade descriptors must be clearly accessible with appropriate command verbs (create, design, produce, critically analyse, evaluate etc)
- All ACs must be covered
- All assessments to list all required evidence as a summary in addition to the formal tasks
 - eg style/format of presentation of assessment, word count etc
- Use of interim assessments to be summative
- Use of formative assessments to include regular "lite-touch" in class session activities
 - MCQs
 - Pop-tests
 - Quizzes
 - Debates

- Student 5 min micro teach sessions

Level 4 (Year 1)

- 3-4 smaller assignments meeting individual Learning Outcomes
- Submission dates spread over the semester
- Varied assessment tools used
- Tasks must be written for higher grades such as Merit and Distinction (where applicable)
- Grade descriptors must be clearly accessible with appropriate command verbs (create, design, produce, critically analyse, evaluate etc)
- All ACs must be covered
- All assessments to list all required evidence as a summary in addition to the formal tasks
 - eg style/format of presentation of assessment, word count etc
- Use of interim assessments to be summative
- Use of formative assessments to include regular “lite-touch” in class session activities
 - MCQs
 - Pop-tests
 - Quizzes
 - Debates
 - Student 5 min micro teach sessions

Level 5 (Year 2)

- 2-3 smaller assignments in general where Learning Outcomes have been merged in on task
- Submission dates spread over the semester
- Use of time constrained assessment tools
- Varied assessment tools used
- Tasks must be written for higher grades such as Merit and Distinction (where applicable)
- Grade descriptors must be clearly accessible with appropriate command verbs (create, design, produce, critically analyse, evaluate etc)
- All ACs must be covered
- All assessments to list all required evidence as a summary in addition to the formal tasks
 - eg style/format of presentation of assessment, word count etc
- Use of interim assessments to be summative
- Use of formative assessments to include regular “lite-touch” in class session activities
 - MCQs
 - Pop-tests
 - Quizzes
 - Debates
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Assignment Submission

Generally a student's assignment will result in a written document. These will be accepted and marked by Centre tutors with feedback returned for future improvement.

- In general all assignments will be submitted via USB sticks.
- This will include a checking for excessive copying and plagiarism
- Students must submit assignments on time
- Email receipts will be sent to students to confirm the submission.
- Any queries about the detail of the assignment task/brief should be responded to by the tutor.
- Any queries relating the actual submission please email examinations@softwareacademy.co.uk.
- Examinations Office will be open from 9.00 AM to 6.00 PM.

Late Submission of Assignments

Late Submission of assignments is often a clear sign of poor time management and lack of commitment to the course, other students and academic staff. In the working environment, whether business, science, engineering, service industries such as Health, social care or tourism, a report or memo presented late to a colleague could lead to a lost tender, finance being withdrawn, medicine not being administered correctly or a group of tourists not getting to their destination because of arriving at the wrong airport terminal.

The Centre will view late submission of assignments very gravely and will be prepared to offer the lowest pass grade if it meets the assessment criteria and to being received within 14 days (2 weeks) of the original deadline.

Grading of Assessments

After the students have submitted their work, it is marked by the tutors against the achievement of each assessment criteria. The tutors will provide feedback against individual assessment criteria including the Merit and Distinction criteria (where applicable) on the feedback sheet for the assignment within **14 day (2 weeks)** for on time submissions.

The tutors / assessors marks will be verified by the internal verifiers (IVs) in the Centre. Assessments are always verified by the Internal Verifiers and/ or Subject experts to check

the marking of a sample of work from across the range of marks plus all the work which has just failed to achieve the pass mark. This also ensures that the work has been assessed at the appropriate standard and in accordance with relevant assessment criteria and quality standards.

All assessments for all registered students must be made available to the external examiners/verifiers who visit the Centre annually. All EVs will expect to sample from the full cohort of students regardless of final grade.

Please note that **all grades are provisional** until confirmed and published by the Assessment Board. ***Please refer to the next section.***

Assessment Criteria

All marking of students' work conforms to assessment criteria. This section outlines the standards that need to be achieved to gain marks in the appropriate category.

The Centre assessors/tutors will employ the following criteria (when applicable) when assessing any form of written or practical work. The assessment criteria are set and published by the awarding organisation of the qualification being studied, and will also be circulated with the assessment briefs.

| Grade | Criteria |
|--------------------|---|
| Fail | Assessment has not been submitted/attempted |
| Refer | Assessment has been submitted/attempted but all or some of pass assessment criteria have not been met |
| Pass | All pass assessment criteria have been met |
| Merit | All pass assessment criteria have been met plus All Merit assessment criteria have been met |
| Distinction | All pass assessment criteria have been met All Merit assessment criteria have been met plus All Distinction assessment criteria have been met |

Referral Procedures

What happens if a student fails a module?

Failure to submit an assignment on or before a LATE submission deadline would result in a FAIL grade and the student shall have to retake the module in another semester. A FAIL grade would also be applicable in cases of Academic Offences (see section below). Students are directed to talk to Student Support services to discuss any relevant issues.

If a student does not achieve an overall module grade “Pass” in the assessment, it would lead to a referral in that module. However, they are allowed to re-submit the referred element(s) of their work by the approved late submission date.

Referral in coursework

If the student’s assignment is referred in a module, they will be required either to remedy the deficiencies of the current course work or undertake new course work.

Referral briefs are normally sent to students via email. If they do not submit work by the specified LATE submission date, no further extensions will be allowed, and they will have to repeat the module.

If the student gets referred in a module because they did not pass the coursework (if applicable), the mark will be followed by the indicator **R or Refer**. This means that they must undertake all assignments in the supplementary period specified by the internal verifier.

Feedback to Students

Feedback on assessment and provisional grades will be given via e-mail or printed formats (or similar digital platforms). All students will be given constructive feedback hence providing them with the opportunity to reflect on their performance for future assignments. The feedback on all assessments will be available to the student within **14 days (2 weeks)** after the submission date.

Please note that **all grades are provisional** until confirmed and published by the Assessment Board.

Standardisation Events

Each programme must hold at least 1 standardisation event per semester chaired by the Head of Department or Programme Leader. The purpose of a standardisation event is to

ensure consistency of marking and grades across various assessors. This validates the results and grades of the assessors work. Acceptable methods of standardisation and are:

- **Dual assessment:** Two assessors assess the same candidates.
- **Cross assessment:** Assessors exchange assignments to check each other's interpretation of the assessment criteria and grade descriptors.
- **Evidence review:** Collation of assessed and graded assignments with discussion around any discrepancies

A member of the Centre's examinations and QA department must be in attendance of the standardisation event

Assessment Boards

Assessment Board meetings are held at the end of each Semester. A separate Assessment Board will be held for LATE submissions. The main purpose of an Assessment Board is to make recommendations on the grades achieved by students on the individual modules, consider any cases of academic offence such as cheating and plagiarism, discuss the awards to be made to students and consider referrals and deferrals if any.

Please note that **all grades are provisional** until confirmed and published by the Assessment Board.

The End